

I-10 WIDENING

Prince Road to 29th Street

Aesthetics Information 2009

Aesthetics in the Tucson District

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) Tucson District has a long and successful history of including aesthetic treatments as part of its major construction projects. While there are no requirements for ADOT to include aesthetic enhancements in its projects, the Tucson District strives to construct highway improvements that are attractive and compatible with adjacent neighborhoods. This improves the quality of the projects, while supporting Tucson as a place that values art and culture.

Aesthetics on the Interstate 10: Prince Road to 29th Street Project

On the I-10: Prince Road to 29th Street project, the design group included architects, landscape architects and artists, as part of the team to provide aesthetic treatment. Wheat Scharf Landscape Associates led the aesthetic treatment team for the Grant Road to St. Mary's Road section. Jim Gresham of Gresham Beach Architects and Gonzalo Espinosa led the Congress Street to 29th Street section.

The aesthetic teams on the project developed concepts based on input from 13 neighborhood associations at 16 meetings. The community repeatedly suggested that the artwork reflect the "flora and fauna" and activities of the surrounding neighborhoods. These concepts were displayed and presented at open houses in December 2004 and October 2005. The final concepts were selected by the community at the open houses, which were attended by approximately 225 people. A total of 80,000 invitations were mailed, in addition to newspaper advertisements and media announcements.

Unifying Themes

The two unifying themes for the project are the Santa Cruz River, which is reflected in imagery throughout the project, and the natural environment of the Sonoran Desert. The Santa Cruz River was the birthplace of the community. The natural Sonoran Desert environment depicted throughout the project features a variety of interesting plant and animal species. The community was asked to help select the most attractive and characteristic features of the area to represent I-10 as a freeway that helps link Tucson's past, present and future.

Grant Road

The unifying theme of the Sonoran Desert environment is represented by Harris hawks and the Santa Cruz River. The imagery also reflects the Pascua Yaqui community and its artwork. Future plans are to involve the Pascua Yaqui community in further development of artwork.

Speedway Boulevard

The unifying theme of the Sonoran Desert environment and the Santa Cruz River continues here, as well as an acknowledgement of the astronomy industry in the Southwest. In 1916, the Steward Observatory (depicted by tile work located on retaining walls) was built on the University of Arizona campus, marking the beginning of astronomy in the region. On March 15, 1960, the McMath-Pierce Solar Telescope, located on Kitt Peak (depicted by tilework located on the retaining walls), was dedicated. A letter from President Kennedy was read during the dedication service:

"The great new solar telescope at the Kitt Peak National Observatory in Arizona is a source of pride to the nation. The largest instrument for solar research in the world, it presents American astronomers with a unique tool for investigating the nearest of the stars, our sun. The thanks of the nation go also to the Papago Indian Tribal Council, and the members of the tribe, for welcoming the National Observatory at Kitt Peak. This mountain notable in the ancient lore of the tribe, will now have a salient role in the modern exploration of the sun and the universe of stars."

Project Hotline: (877) 961-1010 or (520) 327-6444

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The two 10-foot diameter steel sculptures (yet to be installed) will be situated next to the tiled observatories and will represent the supernova explosion of Cassiopeia. The steel sculptures will be backlit with light emitting diodes (LED) as accent lighting.

Located at the bridge (yet to be installed) will be anodized aluminum images depicting the Phoenix Mars Mission, our Solar System, galaxies, nebulae and supernovas. The photographs were provided by Solar and Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) and University of Arizona astronomers.

St. Mary's Road

The unifying theme of the Santa Cruz River imagery continues. In addition, photographic tile murals reflect the rich cultural heritage of the adjacent barrios. The images on the north side of the underpass from left to right are numbered N1-N5, and the images on the south side from left to right are numbered S1-S5.

- ◆ N1: Photo by David Sanders of Josefa Rico Carillo, 100, of Barrio Anita, making tortillas
- ◆ N2: Romero family (baseball players, 1930s)
- ◆ N3: Yolanda Robles Lopez is the bride on May 11, 1968
- ◆ N4: Photo by David Sanders of 10-year-old Julie Perez at her grandmother's house in window next to Jesus statue
- ◆ N5: L-R: Gabriel and Ramon Encinas, 1950s
- ◆ S1: Photo by David Sanders of Frank Pesqueira, 98, and his two sons Frank, 63, and Art, 59, at the family business Grande Tortilla Factory
- ◆ S2: L-R: Frank Finley, Joe Finley and Raul Carrasco in 1950
- ◆ S3: Armida McKenna with her baby daughter, Paloma
- ◆ S4: Photo by David Sanders of Monsignor Arsenio Carrillo at Holy Family Church
- ◆ S5: Photo by David Sanders of sisters Margarita Rico Olivas, 99, and Josefa Rico Carillo, 100, of Barrio Anita

Congress Street

Congress Street is the gateway to downtown and was minimally enhanced to allow the City of Tucson and the Tucson-Pima Arts Council to develop themes in the future.

Cushing Street

Cushing Street, with its fossil imagery and metal pattern on the bridge, reflects the importance of the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show to the community. The visible-light portion of the electromagnetic spectrum which is depicted on the bridge is important to both physics and astronomy, and identifies the gateway to the future University of Arizona Science Center.

18th Street

This pedestrian underpass is designed to function as a community gallery. The tile murals that were located on the west side of the old underpass have been relocated to the walls of the new underpass. These murals are the beginning of the community gallery and will provide an opportunity for the adjacent neighborhoods to add additional art work in the future.

22nd Street

Gonzalo Espinosa, a nationally recognized artist, created the laser-cut metal sculptures on the walls of the 22nd Street Bridge. The sculptures are a celebration of the community. Each bridge also features a metal lantern box at each of its four abutments.

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